NCMC Bulletin

The Official Newsletter of The National Capital Macintosh Club

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A Detective Story: Investigations on the New Macs

Also in this issue...

- **Raiders** of the Lost ROM Boot Disk
- **The Return of The Jedi Programmer:** Geneviève's "About HyperCard" Column
- To Party and Die in TO: Surviving the Fun at the First Toronto **MACWORLD Expo**
- modus operandi: Exporting **HyperCard** Data to **Microsoft WORD** in Rich Text Format
- Romancing The Screen: New **Games** and **Entertainment**
- **Diagnosing** the Medical Mac
- Covert Operations at **Rumour Central**

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Please direct all correspondence to :
NCMC
P.O. Box 5685, Station "F"
Ottawa, ON K2C 3M1

NCMC Information Line: 613-236-NCMC

NCMC TeleComputing Service (TCS):
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1990 Executive:

Clifford Crabe	592-0496	President
Beatrice de Gaspé Beaubien	1-253-0900	Vice President, Apple Liaison
Bill Hooper	744-1201	Treasurer
Sue Roseman	824-4888	Secretary
John Altorio	224-8440	Program Director
Abdallah Abi-Aad	592-1485	P.D. Librarian
Will & Jennifer Read	224-7784	NCMC-TCS Sysops
Scotty Adams	592-3492	Info Librarian & Advert. Coordinator
LeRoy Lees	592-0618	Membership & Past President

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EXECUTIVE REPORT

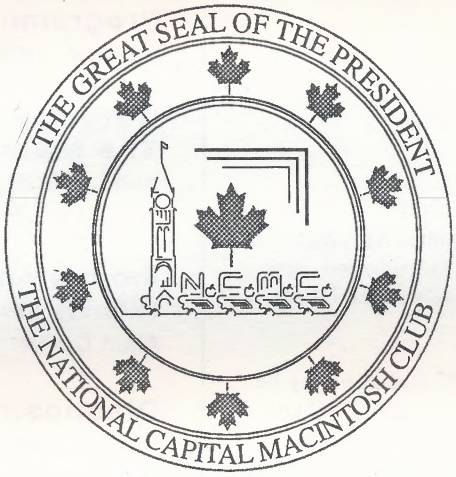
From the Prez...

Clifford Crabe

This is it! My final report to you as President. The year went by fast and what a year it has been! We have had more special guests, our second annual MacBeach party, more MacWorld expos including our first Canadian MacWorld, new Macintoshes, and the inevitable loss of old models of the Mac. Of all the events and memory points the most endearing come from people. I have made many new friends this year and older friends have grown even closer. In this report I will not be saying good-bye. Good-byes are reserved for final farewells. I will still be at the meetings, SIGs and I still intend to write for my favourite Mac magazine, the NCMC Bulletin.

Over the past year we have built closer ties with Apple Canada. We were invited, for the first time, to the Classic, LC and IIsi new product roll out. In cooperation with Apple and Up & Running, we are providing an interpreter for the hearing impaired at our meetings. This year we added T-shirts in a variety of light colours to our apparel line, with the "Freedom to Associate" logo on the front.

We experienced our very first MacWorld in Canada this year. NCMC members were given the opportunity to participate. LeRoy Lees (past President and current Membership Chairman) was on two panels: one on user groups called MUSE, and another on small business. Past Program Director, David Martin, was asked to participate on a multimedia panel. Glenn Brown was a key contributor to a panel on customizing your Macintosh. Even I had the opportunity to contribute. I was on the panel discussing Fonts, Formats and ATM, and a contestant on Macintosh Jeopardy.

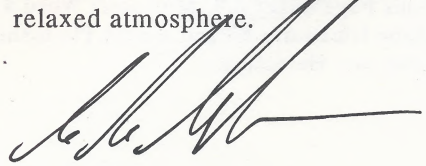


I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to LeRoy Lees for the sage counsel he provided, Scotty Adams for being there whenever I needed her, Will and Jennifer Read each time there was a job to do — they already had it in hand, Bill Hooper for keeping the books straight, Abdallah Abi-Aad for inspiring more people than ever to buy and support the PD Library (a favourite of mine), Sue Roseman for the hours required to take Minutes, John Altorio for bringing in really wonderful speakers and keeping the General Meeting on track, and Biti Beaubien for giving us the design for our T-shirt and almost single-handedly running the NCMC area of the CAUG booth at MacWorld.

At the time of this writing we are heading into our first election. Biti Beaubien and John Altorio are bidding for the position of President. Also, John Cebasek and Ross Slade are interested in being Program Director. Best wishes to all candidates and congratulations to the winners.

Well, it is time to close off this report. I look forward to be able to spending more time with friends and family, sitting and just enjoying the meetings. I also look forward to developing the friendships I have made over the years. I am also going to be working to develop some products for which I never had the time before.

To those of you who are considering involving yourself in the club activities, I would encourage you. I can tell you from personal experience that the benefits extend beyond the obvious. Whether you are interested in an executive position or would just like to contribute an article to the Bulletin, NCMC needs people. A volunteer club is only as good as the participation of its members. Over the years the NCMC has grown in size and has received accolades from across the country. That came based on the efforts of the people who chose to volunteer some time to help out. No special qualifications beyond a sincere desire to help are required. With that, I will leave you now and look forward to our future conversations in a more relaxed atmosphere.



V.P.'s Report

Beatrice de Gaspé Beaubien

MacWorld Expo

Even Mac the Knife at MacWEEK magazine noted that the MacWorld Expo in Toronto was quite a do.

User Groups profited from the show, in addition to the 120–plus exhibitors. Canadian User Groups were given the use of a double booth by Laurentian Technomedia, the organisers of the event. Apple Canada, through the goodness of Mark Barook at the Markham head office and Shirley–Ann George, the Ottawa District head, helped us rent the furniture for the booth.

Club Mac, LOGIC, NCMC and WatR MUG were represented, and numerous user group representatives stopped by to say hello; the visitors came from Australia, North America and Europe. All the clubs attracted new members and lined up presenters for future general meetings. NCMC T–shirts and sweatshirts were snapped up by Mac enthusiasts from France to Queensland, Australia, and our newsletters were a hit; 70 were sold and 79 others were requested. We have new members in Toronto and points beyond who wanted to join just to receive our Bulletin. Many thanks to those who relieved me of booth duty so I could grab a look at the show, especially Scotty, Cliff, and the team of execs from WatR MUG.

Among the user friendly exhibitors at the show was Merisel, the Canadian software distributor. Mare, from the Toronto office, cheerfully complemented needy users' pin collections on demand. Apple was there, demonstrating diverse software solutions. Tom Chavez from the MacApp product team was present, inviting provocative questions from Mac developers. ComputerLand offered the services of their LaserWriters for desperate desktop publishers in need of on–the–spot publication facilities, and Guy Kawasaki was handing out free smiles, wit and signed samples of his book, *The Macintosh Way*. Intensive hands–on training in most major applications (including Quark Express 3.0) was being offered *gratuit*. The $1100 Mac Classics and free T–shirts started flowing the second day. The T–shirts made up for their individual plainness by their variety and Newbridge Micro was quietly distributing an exclusive high quality sports shirt edition. Kind of Christmas–come–early.

The most convivial greetings I exchanged on behalf of NCMC were with Jim Ferr (our TechLink Sysop), Ray Wilson from TRG at Apple, and John Boyle, who is taking over the reins of Apple's user group responsibilities from Mark Barook.

Ed Lowe of the MicroStore in LeSueur, MN was a generous exhibitor. Not only did Ed give samples of his technicolour, multidimensional mouse pads to Club Mac for their auction in December, he was also handing out very fetching marble Full Page Display mouse pads and examples of their well known disk wallets.

The user group party animals got themselves well–and–truly partied–out. The best after–hours events the UG reps identified were the Radius Canada soirée at Windows in the Skydome (including the Radius TV demo and wonderful food, but odd location choice), and the Ingram Micro D retro–evening in Sparkles at the top of the CN Tower. All of the MacWorld bashes were unnervingly easy to get into.

The biggest disappointment was the absence of the Motion Works booth, the animation/HyperCard developers from Vancouver.

Lincoln Henthorn, from Ottawa's Newbridge Microsystems, reported it was a very successful show for them. Maybe next year they can host a suite.

Mike and Doreen Blumenthal, Club Mac executives, were our hosts for our stay in Toronto. They rolled out the red carpet and were spectacularly hospitable; a very warm thank you to you both. Next year we'll check out even more parties.

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EXCLUSIVE REPORT

NCMC Public Domain Library

Ken Ewing

Most Macintosh User Groups (MUGS), such as the NCMC, maintain what is customarily called a Public Domain (PD) Library. This is a bit of a misnomer since many of the items in the library are copyrighted and/or Shareware. To assist new members, a brief article will be published in each issue of the NCMC Bulletin to answer questions relating to what is in the library as well as describing features of selected applications.

First, it might be useful to remember that the individual items were created on a particular machine, using a particular system version and the programming software available to the author. Because of the rapid proliferation of machines from the original Mac to the IIfx, with numerous system revisions along the way, it should not be surprising that what works on one machine may not work, or work as well, on another. Similarly, what works with one application may not work with a newer, revised version. Using PD software should therefore be approached in a spirit of adventure. It can be fun, it may be useful and it is always interesting. Also, it is rather fascinating to delve into the code in an attempt to see how a particular author attacked a specific programming problem. But please, do not pirate somebody else's code.

Second, not all authors are highly skilled programmers. In many cases, the published item represents a first time foray into programming. Hence offerings may vary in the degree of sophistication and quality, without all the bells and whistles one might expect. Indeed, there are HyperCard stacks that repeat endlessly, with no visible or even invisible means of turning them off except by shutting off the power. However, most applications do the job, if not always with elegance or documentation to guide the unwary. It is even rather nice to find, on occasion, a game that you can actually win.

...thousands of weird, imaginative, innovative, whimsical, handy or downright useful programs have been built

Since the introduction of Basic, Pascal, 'C' and other powerful programming languages on the Mac, literally thousands of weird, imaginative, innovative, whimsical, handy or downright useful programs have been built. The library attempts to assess various programs as they become available and to select only those that appear to have some merit or appeal to the club membership.

In the early days of the Mac, available commercial programs were very low powered due to memory restrictions. Beside being a trifle dicey, one often found that they lacked some particularly useful feature that would have improved the user's lot immensely. Authors therefore flocked to supply bits and pieces to perform functions not otherwise available. Now, with both RAM and ROM available in adequate quantities, commercial developers have improved their scope and range of products, often incorporating ideas that originated in Shareware. As commercial applications have progressed so the need for Shareware applications has diminished. Therefore a steady decline in availability of quality Shareware is to be expected. Nevertheless, the Shareware system offers a very inexpensive route to market for aspiring developers, so there will continue to be some interesting material surfacing from time to time. We expect that in the near future, the number of applications that can be offered at the monthly meetings may decline.

Simply making Shareware available to members is not a primary objective of the club. More important is the provision of a forum for sharing and exchanging knowledge and experiences. Many members come to the general meetings but don't participate. They buy Shareware disks but there is virtually no feedback on how interesting, useless, useful, challenging or

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Romancing The Screen: New Games & Entertainment

Scott Dunlop

At the MacWorld Expo in Boston, only eight new Mac games were shown. This was the fewest number ever displayed in the history of the show. Let's start with one of the more promising games shown, **Vette!** by Spectrum Holobyte. In this colour or black and white game you race against the clock in one of several different types of Corvettes on the streets of San Francisco. There are many different views such as behind the car, above the car, and the computer controlled car view, all with varying degrees of magnification. This program retails for around $70 and comes with both black and white and colour versions. Next is **Faces,** or **Tetris 3**, also by Spectrum Holobyte. In this game you must position pieces of famous people's heads, such as Mikhail Gorbachev, as they drop from the top so that they make complete faces. This games comes with both colour and black and white versions and retails for around $50. Chris (**Balance of Power**) Crawford's new game **Guns and Butter** was shown, as was his other new game, **Balance of the Planet**. In **Balance** you are High Commissioner of the Environment and must raise and lower taxes on meats, and oil, etc. This is a very informative and fun environmental education game. It retails for $50 and comes with both colour and black and white versions. Cassady and Green, producers of **Crystal Quest**, were shipping two new action games named **Skyshadow**, and **Mission Starflight**. Each game retails for about $50 and comes with both colour and black and white versions. XOR Corporation, producers of **MacGolf**, were showing

...race against the clock in one of several different types of Corvettes on the streets of San Francisco

MacSki, a very easy and graphically boring ski simulator. MacSki retails for $70 and comes with both colour and black and white versions. Lastly is **Darwin's Dilemma**, which is produced by Interplay, the designers of **Bomber**. In Dilemma, you push various icons into each other to form another icon, such as two maple leaves that turn into a flag. It retails for $50 and includes both colour and black and white versions. Darwin's Dilemma is a commercial version of a Shareware program which only lacks one feature: colour.

Soon–to–be–Released

It's no secret that there has been a gradual decrease in new Macintosh games, but there are several forthcoming new ones that warrant your attention. Coming soon or early in 1991 is **Harpoon**, a naval war simulator of unequaled sophistication from Three Sixty Corporation. Harpoon was first released for DOS machines last year where it was very successful. Sierra–Online, best known for it's **King's Quest** series used to develop its games in AGI, their own in–house programming language, but AGI graphics are blocky and IBM–like. Their language called SCI that is used on other Hi–Res graphic machines will now be used on all new Sierra releases for the Mac. SCI incorporates stunning 16 and 256 colour screens, digitized sounds and voices. Some of their new releases include **King's Quest 4**, **Codename: Iceman**, **SpaceQuest 3**, **Hero's Quest**, **Police Quest 2**, **The Colonel's Bequest**, **Leisure Suit Larry 2**, **Leisure Suit Larry 3**, and **Conquests of Camelot**. These are definitely worth a look. Finally from Maxis, the creator of **SimCity**, is **SimEarth**. Here you create an environment suitable for life, let plants and animals eventually evolve into man, and finally get to Spacefaring Man. This game has excellent digitized sounds, 8 bit colour, and spans several million years.

Happy Gaming!

EXCLUSIVE COLUMN

About HyperCard...

Geneviève Crabe

This is the first in a series of articles which will examine the new features of HyperCard 2.0.

Ever since HyperCard first came out in 1987, users have been very vocal about what features they would like to see implemented. Looking at the list of new features in HyperCard 2.0, it is clear that Apple has been listening.

Hot Text

Hot text is probably the enhancement most requested by users. Many HyperCard-based applications are in the area of Hypertext, where clicking on text is the usual method of navigation. In HyperCard 1.2.x, it was possible to lock a text field and detect mouse clicks on it, but a lot of fancy scripting was required to figure out the actual word on which the user clicked. Many articles and books devoted a lot of space to discussing these techniques.

Now in HyperCard 2.0, this feature has been implemented in HyperTalk in a very clever way, giving a lot of power to us scripters. If you have HyperCard 2.0, you can follow along by creating a new stack and trying out these techniques.

There are three new HyperTalk functions that will tell you about what the user clicked on: clickText, clickChunk, and clickLine.

ClickText

This function returns the word that was clicked on in a field. If you want to detect when the user clicks on a field, and find out which word was clicked, write this handler into the field script.

```
on mouseUp
  put the clickText
end mouseUp
```

Make sure the field is locked. When you click on the field, the word you clicked on will be put into the message box.

Sometimes, you would like **clickText** to return more than one word. For example, suppose you have a field which contains some people's names, and you want the user to be able to click on a name to perform some action. Names usually consist of more than one word, so if the field con-

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KUDOS & THANKS

Walter J. Cooke

We want to thank everyone who helped produce this issue of the NCMC Bulletin. As usual, the Triple Oak-leaf medallion for *Bravery Above and Beyond the Call of Duty* goes to **Scotty** for her ever vigilant proof-reading and ad work, **Bill** "That's just not good enough Mr. Burton" **Hooper** for past eagle eyed proof reading, **Biti's** hard work finding us writers and encouraging them, nay even dragging them along, to get their ideas into print, design-guru **Ross** "If it's not broken, maybe it's just a bit SCSI" **Slade**, volunteers like **Chuck Willemsen** and **Mike Schmiderer** who make sure this ends up getting to wherever it needs to be worked on in time, and **Cliff** for his suggestions.

Special awards go to all who took the time to actually write some really good stuff for us! Please send us more really soon. Also Mrs. Beazlie's brownies and some Russian tea deserve my thanks for keeping me awake while doing this last night.

Any remaining mistakes you find in here are my responsibility and mine alone. *-wjc.*

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tains *John Smith*, *John Brown*, and *Mike Smith*, and **clickText** returns just one word, you would find out that the user clicked on *John*, but how do you tell which one?

Well, our friends at Apple have anticipated this and have provided a way to glue words together — in a manner of speaking. If you look under the **Style** menu (see Figure 1), you will find a new style called **Group**. In our example, type some text into the field, including the names listed above. Then, select each name and choose the **Group** style from the **Style** menu. Lock the field, and try clicking on one of the names. You can click on any part of *John Smith*, and the **clickText** function will return the whole name.

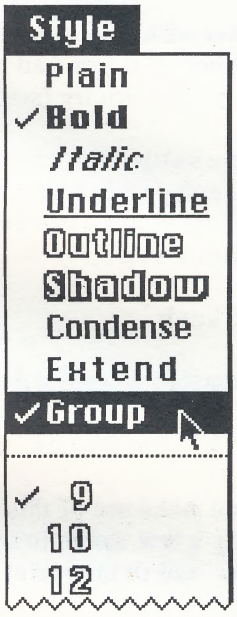

Figure 1: The Style Menu

There is a new HyperTalk command which lets you peek at grouped text. Try typing

```
show groups
```

into the message box. If you have any grouped text, it will be underlined by a 2-pixel thick gray line (see Figure 2). This remains active for the rest of the HyperCard session, or until you give the command

```
hide groups
```

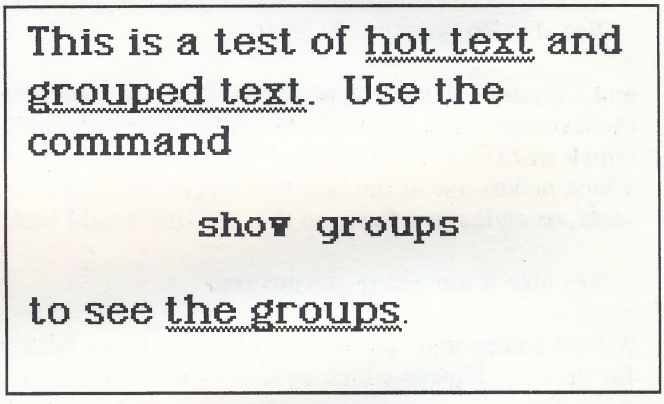

Figure 2: Grouped Text

ClickLine

A common use for a scrolling field is as a list of objects that the user can click on. For example, you could have a list of the cards in the stack, where the user can click on a line to go to that card.

The **clickLine** function returns the line that you clicked on, something like this:

```
line 3 of card field 2
```

As you can see, the second word of this expression is the actual line number, so you can write a script like this:

```
on mouseUp
  go to card (word 2 of the clickLine)
end mouseUp
```

Clicking on the second line of this field will go to the second card of the stack.

Together with this, you can use the **select** command which selects a chunk of text just as if you had clicked and dragged over it. This will make the line highlight briefly (see Figure 3).

```
on mouseUp
  select the clickLine
  go to card (word 2 of the clickLine)
end mouseUp
```

ClickChunk

This function returns a description of the text you clicked on:

```
char 12 to 25 of card field 1
```

You can make use of this in interesting ways. If you have a large text field, but only a few words in the field are "clickable", you can provide a cue to the user, and to the script as well.

In the new version 4.2 of the **INITInfo** HyperCard stack, there are a series of fields which describe INIT conflicts; many of these fields end with something like

> See also Boomerang, Exposure.

and I wanted the user to be able to click on Exposure, for example, and go the Exposure card. Also, I wanted the user to be able to see at a glance which words can be clicked on. I came up with the following solution, which makes use of the fact that HyperCard 2.0 allows a mixture fonts, sizes, or styles in a field, so that the line would look like this:

> See also **Boomerang, Exposure.**

All the names that can be clicked on are made bold; this is the visual cue for the user. Names which consist of more than one word are grouped. Also, the names correspond exactly to card names, so if the user clicks on Exposure, I want to go to the card named Exposure. In the field script, I do the following:

```
on mouseUp
  if "bold" is in the textStyle of the clickChunk
then
    go to card (the clickText)
  end if
end mouseUp
```

This handler will ignore clicks on text which is not bold. If the user clicks on bold text, the script goes to the appropriate card.

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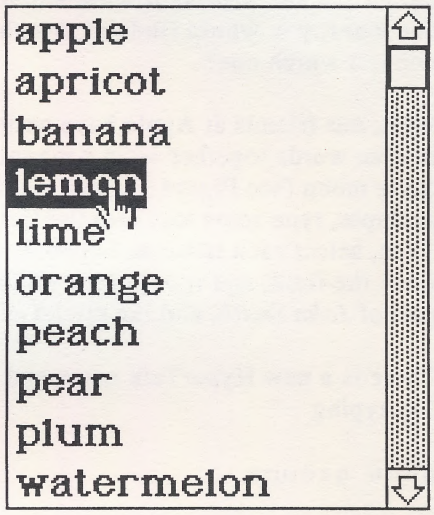

Figure 3: Highlighted Text

EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE

Detective Work on The New Macs: The Classic, LC, & IIsi

Ben Lawson, LaserComp Solutions, Inc.

October 15th, Apple unveiled three new hardware slot formats, along with three machines to hold them. The new machines were probably one of Apple's worse–kept secrets, as speculation over when Apple would finally abandon its pricing premiums had been circulating for over a year. The new machines are aimed directly at the MS–DOS clones that Apple has disdained for so long.

The new Macintosh Classic replaces the Plus and SE, while the Macintosh IIsi appears to be positioned to fill the gap left by the discontinued but popular Mac IIcx. The Macintosh LC, not due until January, introduces an entirely new species of Macintosh. The IIsi and LC also introduce a new standard capability for direct sound input through a sound input port and integral microphone. We can expect both developers and the System software to take advantage of this in the very near future.

These machines open up an entirely new market for Apple's flagship product line. In the past, many people haven't looked beyond the sticker price. Many people have failed to take into account the built–in Macintosh features that are expensive options on DOS machines, or the value of the consistent, feature–rich Macintosh interface. Macs have always been a shock to the wallet, no matter how many times they paid for themselves in productivity gains. However, these new machines are priced within the range of better PC clones.

So how did Apple manage to put together such inexpensive machines, after years of premium pricing? Surprisingly, the answer is not by reducing capabilities or using cheaper parts. The answer is in *more* technology and engineering. The new Macs have reduced the number of chips on the motherboard by using custom VLSI chips that combine the functions of numerous discrete chips. Manufacturing has been streamlined by reducing the part count and careful redesign. For example the Mac LC has a 27 chip motherboard that is roughly half the size of the old SE's. The IIsi chassis doesn't contain a single screw.

The new pricing didn't come without sacrifices, however. In each of the new machines Apple took a hard look at what current features were actually being used. Gone are the multiple ADB ports at the back of the box, the seldom needed multiple expansion slots, and most of the SIMM slots. Neither the LC or IIsi have a Floating Point Unit (FPU) coprocessor, even though an FPU chip has been in every previous 68020 or 68030 equipped Mac. In each case the basic memory is soldered to the motherboard, and smaller non–international power supplies have been used (only 10 watts is available for use by internal hard drives).

New machines also mean new System software. The new Macs ship with System 6.0.7 (what happened to 6.0.6 you ask? Well, lets just say that 6.0.6 was bottled before its time. And stay tuned for 6.0.8!). Aside from direct support for the new Mac hardware, System 6.0.7 gives us another peek at System 7.0, with the inclusion of the System 7.0 Sound Manager. Notably, the new software supports Macintosh Audio Compression and Expansion (MACE), allowing real–time compression and expansion of sound. Apple provides a facility for directly recording beep sounds. Before long the software developers will give us convincing reasons to use sound input on a regular basis for things like electronic mail and voice annotated spreadsheets.

The Macintosh Classic

AppleSpeak strikes again! "Classic" no longer refers to the original beige Macintosh with 128 K of RAM memory. It now refers to a brand new product with 512 K of ROM alone. Looking somewhat like a Plus with a curved face, the Classic actually bears more similarities to the SE.

Powered by the 8 MHZ 68000 chip that is shared by all previous compact Macs, the Classic is a masterpiece of integration. One megabyte of RAM is soldered onto the motherboard. The sole SIMM slot can hold up to three MB of RAM using a special SIMM holding card.

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just plain dumb the members find the various items. Even what will or will not run on a given machine would be useful feedback. Do any members have or know about non-commercial games, utilities, stacks etc that they feel might be of interest and should be included in the library?

To this end, members are urged to come to the Public Domain Special Interest Group (PD SIG) meetings held in the Up and Running premises, National Building, 130 Slater Street on the second Tuesday of each month. Come prepared to ask questions, participate in discussions, demonstrate some feature or features of an application,share your knowledge or frustrations with others. Come and share an informal opportunity for users of all levels of expertise to discuss various aspects of the Mac's application world.

Another cause for the decline of Shareware may be that as more powerful and also more expensive machines became the predominate platforms of choice by programmers, the PD and Shareware programmers found that they could not keep up with the cost. Now that more affordable machines are now available I can foresee a re-emergince of these budding programmers. Of course, the greatest incentive we can provide to these creative individuals would be to pay promptly for Shareware software that we use. One cannot overlook the value of money as a motivator.

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HyperCard

Alternatively, you could have two different styles which mean two different things. For example, imagine a stack of information on Macintosh software. The main field contains some information, including the product name (displayed in bold), and the company name (displayed in italics). You could write the following handler in the field:

```
on mouseUp
  if "bold" is in the textStyle of the clickChunk
then
    show card field "Product Info"
  else if "italic" is in the textStyle of the
clickChunk then
    show card field "Company Info"
  end if
end mouseUp
```

From these few examples, you can see that these features add a great deal of power to HyperCard. In future articles, I will explore some of the other new features of HyperCard 2.0.

Until next time...
Happy scripting!

MacStanfield

Macintosh upgrade service.

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continued from page 9

The Classic's 512 K of ROM actually contains essentially the same ROM as the SE. The remainder is used for an intriguing "ROM Boot Disk." *[See related "Raiders" story. –ed.]* It contains System 6.0.2 (power up the Classic with *Command–Option–x–o* held down; then use the Startup Device cdev to select and reboot from the ROM Disk.) The Classic includes room for a low power, one inch, internal hard drive similar to those in the Mac Portable.

The Classic is available with one MB of RAM ($1,349), or with two MB of RAM and a 40 MB internal hard drive ($1,999). Both versions include a new ADB keyboard.

The Macintosh LC

The LC will be the last machine to arrive, but holds the most promise. It is a thin slice of plastic with only room for a floppy drive, single custom slot, and a one inch hard disk. The LC will be the machine for education, small businesses, and home users wanting colour.

The LC has the equivalent power of the original Mac II, namely a 16 MHZ 68020 CPU. It will contain 256 K of separate VRAM (upgradable to 512 K by replacing the VRAM SIMM) for its onboard video circuitry. Only two SIMM slots will be available, but by using 4 MB SIMMS the LC will be able to directly access 10 MB of RAM. The LC will feature a single "020 Expansion Slot Interface" for specially designed cards. Apple intends to release an Apple IIe emulation card. This is the long–awaited upgrade path for Apple //e owners! Also coming is an Ethernet card. Other manufacturers have hinted at multi–function cards that no LC owner will want to be without.

The LC will be available with two MB of RAM for $2,799, or with two MB RAM and a 40 MB hard drive for $3,499. It will include the new smaller ADB keyboard, but a monitor will cost extra.

The Macintosh IIsi

The machine for IIfx wannabees, the IIsi features a 20 MHZ 68030, 2 MB of soldered RAM, onboard video circuitry, and yes, another new slot. The IIsi will likely end up as the machine of choice in business, as it offers speed, choice in monitors, and the ability to use a NuBus card through an adapter.

The IIsi is very similar to the current IIci, lacking only the NuBus slots and 4 SIMM slots. In place of the IIci's NuBus slots the IIsi offers a single "030 Expansion Slot Interface" that is pin compatible with SE/30 expansion cards. The IIsi's slot can accept standard NuBus or SE/30 cards with the appropriate Apple adapter card, which will also add the FPU chip that is not included on the motherboard. The IIsi will be able to directly access up to 17 MB of RAM using 4 MB SIMMS!

The IIsi will be available with 2 MB of RAM and a 40 MB hard drive for $5,277, or with 5 MB of RAM and an 80 MB hard drive for $6,397. Keyboards and monitors cost extra.

Raiders of The Lost ROM Boot Disk

Walter Cooke

ROM snooping in the Mac Classic revealed an undocumented new feature. The Classic's 512–Kbyte ROMS include a hidden 358–Kbyte "ROM Boot Disk." As reported by Mac the Knife in **MacWEEK** magazine, you can't normally see the ROM disk, but engineers at Outbound, who sell the Outbound laptop Mac, showed off an INIT that mounts the hidden drive on the Macintosh desktop. The Get Info box says the disk is "hiding inside this machine..."

It is speculated that this code is a prelude to Apple's plans for the release next spring of AppleShare 3.0. One rumour says that the new version 3.0 will allow diskless workstations to boot from an AppleShare server. In this scenario, the new Mac Classic and possibly the colour LC could be configured as a lower cost, disk–less alternative to hook up to your server. Another rumour suggested that the Boot Disk is a lingering appendix of scuttled plans to market the Classic as a diskless workstation.

When starting up a new Classic, you can bring the ROM Boot Disk to life by holding down the Command–Option–X–O keys (although not easily if you have any physical disabilities with you hands.) This key combination causes the Classic to start up with System 6.0.2 complete with AppleShare. An early code name for the Classic was "XO" which might explain the weird keystrokes.

EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE

modus operandi: From HyperCard To WORD With *Style*

Alain Drolet

Do you ever build HyperCard stacks, containing hundred of entries, that you would like to transform into nicely formatted text documents, with all the font, style and margin variations of your taste? Do you have access to the Microsoft Word word processor and are you not afraid to get a bit technical (here I assume that you can read HyperTalk)? Then you will want to read this article.

Last summer I was involved in the production of technical documents. We were using stacks to store hundreds of records. However, the final document had to be delivered on hard copies. Originally we built HyperCard scripts that wrote field contents with Tabs and Returns to a text file. In order to beautify the report, hours had to be spent to change the font or style of specific lines of the report. A more automated approach was very much needed, particularly since we often modified the stacks, requiring us to export them again.

One morning it came to mind that Microsoft Word can read a file format called Rich Text Format (RTF). This file format describes the format of a text document (font, style, rulers, etc.) entirely with human-readable characters. The solution was thus to make a script that would embed the RTF formatting codes into the stream of strings extracted from the card fields. Since I had no knowledge of the structure of RTF formatted text, the fun became to reverse-engineer the RTF by *Saving As* known files with the RTF option (you can also ask Microsoft to provide you a copy of the format, but this takes time and you have to find someone aware of the existence of this document at Microsoft. This is not as much fun).

This article focuses on the basic setup needed to create Word–RTF files from a HyperCard stack. Due to space limitations, only a small subset of the RTF format will be discussed here. For more examples, just use WORD to create a test file that contains the format you want. Save it as RTF and examine the code created by Word. It is not hard to figure out how Microsoft does it.

For the purpose of this article, I created a small demo stack that is made up of two backgrounds. The first background has one card and hosts the export button; the second has three data cards and contains the data to be exported (see figure 1). You can obtain a copy of this stack from the PD Library of the National Capital Macintosh Club of Ottawa.

The Script

The export script, as displayed in Box 1, can be summarized by the following points:

- create a new empty file with TYPE="TEXT" and CREATOR="MSWD"
- store the RTF header
- loop on all cards of the second background
    - for each card, store its field contents and add format code
- close the export file
- return to the card of the first background

Some HyperCard external commands are used in this script. Even though they are helpful, it is possible to re-write this script without using them.

The script sends a message to a handler called *put_Header_in*, which creates and stores the header code expected for an RTF file. This header, except for the styles list, should be relatively static from one application to another. The styles list is defined by the function *style_list*, which is where you define the styles you want for a particular stack.

Using RTF you can modify the format of a section of a paragraph only. However, when the same type of information appears hundreds of times (as in this application), it would be wise to use Word's style sheet feature. Once the stack is

continued on page 14...

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continued from page 11

Drum Roll Please...

So what does the future hold for Apple and its new machines? Over the last year Apple's sales have shown only a moderate increase, and Apple's market share has actually fallen in the United States. Clearly, drastic measures are required for Apple to regain its position. The introduction of Windows 3.0 has reduced the perceived (as opposed to actual) advantage of the Macintosh over MS–DOS machines as well.

With these new machines Apple can now win on price as well as features, especially when capabilities such as networking are included in the equation. Informed buyers have always looked at Macintosh first, and only gone elsewhere when the performance they wanted was out of their price range. Now they will be able to get the Macintosh advantages without paying a price premium, and we can expect a larger penetration into previously soft markets.

"The IBM PC is the Metamucil of personal computers. You use it because you have to, not because you want to."

–Guy Kawasaki,
Author of
The Macintosh Way

continued from page 12

exported, you could decide to change the format of a field and in no time flat you could update hundreds of entries by doing some simple operations in the Define Styles dialog box.

```
{\f14\fnil Bookman;}          {\f15\fnil N Helvetica Narrow;}
{\f16\fnil Palatino;}
{\f18\fnil Zapf Chancery;}    {\f20\froman Times;}
{\f21\fswiss Helvetica;}
{\f22\fmodern Courier;}       {\f23\ftech Symbol;}
{\f33\fnil Avant Garde;}
{\f34\fnil New Century Schlbk;}
{\f238\fnil C Helvetica Condensed;}

style_list      = <{\stylesheet> normal_style {style_spec} <}>
normal_style    = <{\f20\sbasedon222\snext0 Normal;}> or similar
                  Define the default style.  222 means "based on no
style."
style_spec      = <{\s> i sformat <\sbasedon> j <\snext> k space
style_name <;}>
i               = index of the style
j               = index of the style on which style i is based
k               = index of the style following style i
style_name      = a string

init            = \widowctrl\ftnbj \sectd \linemod0\linex0\cols1
                  Various options you can set in WORD.

ftext           = the text to print with embedded groups containing
format codes

sformat         = any formatting codes
```

A typical style definition "sformat" could look like this:

```
                  <\tx720\tx2880> Δ <\b\i\f20\fs48> Δ

<\tx720\tx2880>  = tab settings at 0.5" and 2.0"
                     The unit used for ruler positioning ( tabs, in-
                     dents, etc.) is the twip. There are 1440 twips per
                     inch, or 20 per point.
<\b\i>           =  bold and italic
<\f20\fs48>      =  font 20 (Times), at 24 points
                     The font sizes are specified in half-points.
```

To use a style when formatting a paragraph, use codes like this:

```
<\pard\plain> Δ <\s2\tx720\tx2880> Δ <\b\i\f20\fs48> Δ your_text
<\par>
```

These codes will reset the paragraph format to default, make it plain, apply style 2 (strangely Word likes to respecify the tabs and fonts), embed your text, and add an end-of-paragraph mark. Note that it is important to replace all your returns (0x0D) by the RTF code <\par>. Regular returns are ignored by the RTF reader. However, it is a good idea to embed a return every so often, as this will ease the transfer of files when using communication software.

You can also change the style of part of a paragraph by using grouping. The following example shows how to bold a few words:

```
some_codes some_text <{\b>  words_in_bold <}> rest_of_paragraph
```

There is a large set of codes that you can use. A subset of the most common ones is listed below. Here *n* is a numeral normally smaller than 31,680; in some cases it can be negative:

<\f> n	select a font
<\fs> n	set font size (half points)
<\li> n	left indent relative to margin (twips)
<\fi> n	first line indent, relative to left indent (twips)
<\ri> n	right indent, relative to right margin (twips)
<\tx> n	left tab setting (twips)
<\tqc\tx> n	center tab setting (twips)
<\tqr\tx> n	right tab setting (twips)
<\tqdec\tx> n	decimal tab setting (twips)
<\b>	bold
<\i>	italic
<\outl>	outline
<\shad>	shadow
<\ul>	continuous underline
<\ulw>	word underline
<\up> n	superscript (half points)
<\dn> n	subscript (half points)

There are also codes for special characters:

<\par> space	end of paragraph
<\line> space	new line
<\tab> space	tab
<\page> space	new page
<\~>	nonbreaking space
<\'d2>	open quote
<\'d3>	close quote

Remember that these sample codes only show a small subset of what can be done with RTF. You could also add codes for headers and footers, multiple columns, tables, and so on.

Conclusion

You can build a script similar to the one shown in Box 1 and place it in a button. Clicking on the button produces a Word file. When you open this file with Word, Word will realize that the file contains RTF codes and ask if you want to convert it. Answer yes and, voilà, you get formatted text similar to the demo text displayed in Box 2. (To help you see what is happening, the non-converted text is presented in Box 3.)

One comment: HyperCard is not renowned as a speed demon, however HyperCard version 2.0 should improve on this. The proposed script takes some time, but it is still much faster and more pleasant than doing it by hand.

Explore RTF's capabilities and enjoy it.

Alain Drolet is a Systems Analyst at Kylain Technologies Incorporated of Ottawa. He has been a Macintosh fanatic and a member od NCMC for many years now.

Thanks to Jane and Rob for the revision.

[The RTF Box1 Script starts on page 16. The RTF Box 2 text, the Box 3 RTF output, and the RTF Figure 1 Stack Images are on page 20. A sample stack is available through the NCMC TCS or PD Library. -ed.]

RTF Box1: HyperTalk Script for the Export Button

```
on mouseUp
 — Store cards content into a text file
 — The file contains codes that are recognized by
MS-WORD
 — as RTF format codes.
 — Style and Font information can thus be exported
this way
 — Alain Drolet, October 1990
 —
 Global ss2,ss3,ss4 — short style for title2, text
body
 Global fmt2,fmt3 — in paragraph format based on
style 2 and 3
 —
 lock screen
 — get name of file to save to, using an XFNC
 get NewFileName("Select the Export
File","ExportFile.RTF")
 if it is empty then exit mouseUp
 put it into OutFile
 Open File OutFile
 — set TYPE and CREATOR of file using one of my
XCMDs
 SetTyCr "TEXT", "MSWD", OutFile
 —
 — Store RTF header
 put_Header_in OutFile
 set cursor to busy   — makes the beach ball turn
 — RTF Constants
 put "{\b " into BOLD
 put "\par " into PAR
 put "\tab " into TB
 put "\page " into PG
 —
 — LOOP on all cards
 go to first cd of bg StrBG
 put the number of cds of this bg into NCd
 — display progress using the PROGRESS XCMD
 Progress 1, "Percentage of cards processed" —
brings progress DLOG
 —
 repeat with x = 1 to Ncd
  if fld Name is not empty — skip empty cards
  then
   put ss2 & fld Name & PAR into temp
   put ss3 & TB & fld Addrs & PAR after temp
   put ss3 & TB & fld City & PAR & PAR after temp
   put ss4 & BOLD & "Telephone}" & PAR & fld tel & ¬
   PAR & PAR after temp
```


National Capital Macintosh Club (NCMC)

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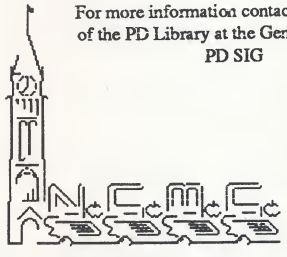

```
   if fld mac = 1300
   then
    put "don't know" into status
   else
    if fld mac = 1301
    then
     put "Yes" into status
    else
     put "No" into status
    end if
   end if
   put "Owns a Mac: " & status & PAR & PAR after
temp

   progress 2, round(100 * x / Ncd) -- move diamond
in progress DLOG
   -- replace regular CR "return" by RTF one "\par"
   -- If any CR existed in the fields, RTF will ig-
nore them
   -- they thus need to be replaced. Be carefull:
each time Replace
   -- is called it eats up a bit of memory, until
HyperCard crashes.
   get Replace(temp,return,PAR,false)
   -- store card data to file, card by card
   write it to file OutFile
  end if -- of if not empty
  go to next cd of this bg
 end repeat
 --
 Close file OutFile
 -- get rid of Progress DLOG, IMPORTANT
 progress 3
 -- return to title card
 go to cd cmd1
end mouseUp

On put_Header_in FName
 write "{" to file FName -- open RTF definition
 write "\rtf1\mac\deff2 " to file FName -- write
version
 set cursor to busy -- makes the beach ball turn
 -- write font_list
 write "{\fonttbl{\f16\fnil Palatino;}{\f20\froman
Times;}" & ¬
 "{\f21\fswiss Helvetica;}{\f22\fmodern Courier;}"
& ¬
 "{\f23\ftech Symbol;}{\f33\fnil Avant Garde;}}" to
file FName
 set cursor to busy -- makes the beach ball turn
```

continued on page 18...

The Top Ten Reasons Why Claris is Still Not Shipping HyperCard 2.0

Disclaimer: It's all lies. Lies lies lies. These lies are fictitious. Any similarity to actual lies, fibs, or prevarications is purely coincidental. These lies are the property of the HyperCard Development Team. Additional Disclaimer: These are last month's lies. This month's lies are very different.

10. Bill left without telling us how it worked.
9. We were saving it as a going-away present for Jean-Louis.
8. It took months to get the color out after we discovered that the manuals didn't mention it.
7. We introduced it at the annual developers' conference, and we thought there was a rule that if you introduce at a developers' conference you can't ship until after the next developers' conference.
6. Bowling shirts just take longer than T-shirts.
5. For most of us, it was a great way to avoid sweltering in Boston in August.
4. It took months to devise all the phony seed releases, with all the phony bugs, which we were doing only as a clever ruse, of course.
3. Nobody told us you were supposed to finish the thing first.
2. Howard Spira had his money on System 7.0.
1. We couldn't ship until we had tested it with the new Macintosh LX, the one with the impressive performance, quiet ride, and distinctive styling, all for under $25,000. See your dealer today.

```
 – Create Style_list from Font & Format settings on
Card·
 set cursor to busy – makes the beach ball turn
 write style_list() to file FName
 –
 write "\widowctrl\ftnbj \sectd
\linemod0\linex0\cols1\" to file FName
 write "endnhere" to file FName
 set cursor to busy – makes the beach ball turn
end put_header_in

Function style_list
 – define two simple style s1=Name and s2=Addrs
 Global ss2,ss3,ss4       – short style for title2,
text body
 Global fmt2,fmt3
 put "{\stylesheet" into temp            – open
style_list
 put "{\f20\sbasedon222\snext0 Normal;}" after temp
– normal style
 – style 2
 put "\b\f21\fs28 " into fmt2        – Helvetica
bold 28 points
 put "\s2 " & fmt2 into ss2
 put "{" & ss2 &" \basedon0\snext2 Name;}" after
temp    – style 1
 put "{\plain " & fmt2 into fmt2
 put "\pard\plain " & ss2 into ss2
 – style 3
 put "\f20 " into fmt3               – Times
 put "\s3\tx720 " & fmt3 into ss3          – left
tab at 0.5"
 put "{" & ss3 &" \basedon0\snext4 Addrs;}" after
temp    – style 2
 put "{\plain " & fmt3 into fmt3
 put "\pard\plain " & ss3 into ss3
 – style 4
 put "\f20 " into fmt4              – Times
 put "\s4\li720 " & fmt4 into ss4        – left
margin at 0.5"
 put "{" & ss4 &" \basedon0\snext4 Tel;}" after temp
– style 2
 put "{\plain " & fmt4 into fmt4
 put "\pard\plain " & ss4 into ss4
 –
 put "}" after temp             – close style_list
 return temp
end style_list
```

[End of RTF Box1 Export Script. -ed.]

continued from page 3

The NCMC Bulletin

Thanks to Walter for editing this issue of the newsletter, and to the contributors who uploaded their articles. At the risk of repeating myself, it is very gratifying to see NCMC members write the majority of the Bulletin. To all those who have been involved with newsletter production over the past year, thank you on behalf of the executive and all the members. You are all truly wonderful, generous, deeply appreciated human beings, and you did a great job.

Adieu and Au Revoir

It's been a riot, in a challenging sort of way.

And that's it for me as V.P.

Walter Cooke is taking over the position at the November general meeting. Walter is a veteran MUG person, from MacWest in Vancouver and the Kingston MUG. I know Walter will be a fine V.P. and all–rounder, and a valuable addition to the executive of NCMC. He is already appreciated for his rambunctious and entertaining writing style, and will soon be valued for his acute judgement, his humanity and wide experience. I couldn't have possibly left the position in better hands.

It has been a pleasure to serve you.

Be good.

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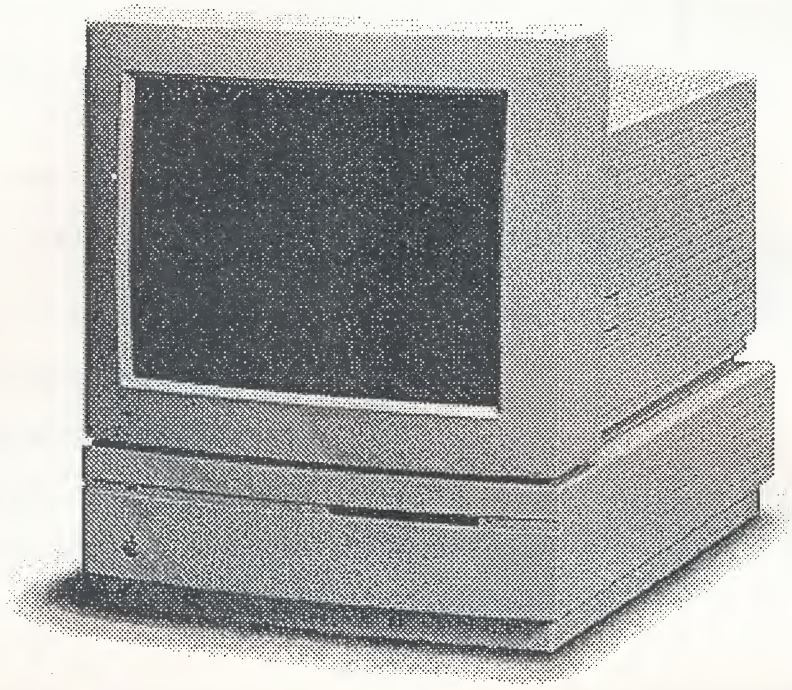

Macintosh Solutions

LaserComp is host to the NCMC Multimedia and Green Mac SIGs

Multimedia SIG
7:00 P.M.
Second Thursday of each month

Green Mac SIG
7:00 P.M.
Fourth Thursday of each month

BOX 2: RTF TO WORD

John NCMC

101-Main Street
Ottawa, Ont, K1K 7Z8

Telephone
232-6789 off
678-3765 home

Owns a Mac: Yes

Joe Bleau

276 Montcalm Ave, A2
Hull, Québec, G1R 4Y7

Telephone
776-2743 off
232-5835 fax
778-8472 home

Owns a Mac: No

Alice Wonder

69 Behind the Mirror St
Wonderland, A1, H0H 0H0

Telephone
911-0000 home

Owns a Mac: don't know

BOX 3: RTF File Created by the Stack

(returns have been added for display purpose)

```
{\rtf1\mac\deff2 {\fonttbl{\f16\fnil
Palatino;}{\f20\froman Times;}
{\f21\fswiss Helvetica;}{\f22\fmodern
Courier;}{\f23\ftech Symbol;}
{\f33\fnil Avant
Garde;}}{\stylesheet{\f20\sbasedon222\snext0 Normal;}
{\s2 \b\f21\fs28 \basedon0\snext2 Name;}
{\s3\tx720 \f20 \basedon0\snext4 Addrs;}
{\s4\li720 \f20 \basedon0\snext4 Tel;}}
\widowctrl\ftnbj \sectd \linemod0\linex0\cols1\endnhere
\pard\plain \s2 \b\f21\fs28 John NCMC\par
\pard\plain \s3\tx720 \f20 \tab 101-Main Street\par
\pard\plain \s3\tx720 \f20 \tab Ottawa, Ontario, K1K
7Z8\par \par
 \pard\plain \s4\li720 \f20 {\b Telephone}\par 232-6789
off\par 678-3765 home
\par \par Owns a Mac: Yes\par \par \pard\plain \s2
\b\f21\fs28 Joe Bleau\par
\pard\plain \s3\tx720 \f20 \tab 276 Montcalm Ave, app
2\par
\pard\plain \s3\tx720 \f20 \tab Hull, Québec, G1R 4Y7\par
\par
\pard\plain \s4\li720 \f20 {\b Telephone}\par 776-2743
off\par 232-5835 fax\par
 778-8472 home\par \par Owns a Mac: No\par \par
\pard\plain \s2 \b\f21\fs28 Alice Wonder\par
\pard\plain \s3\tx720 \f20 \tab 69 Behind the Mirror
St\par
\pard\plain \s3\tx720 \f20 \tab Wonderland, Alsama, H0H
0H0\par \par
\pard\plain \s4\li720 \f20 {\b Telephone}\par 911-0000
home\par
 \par Owns a Mac: don't know\par \par
```

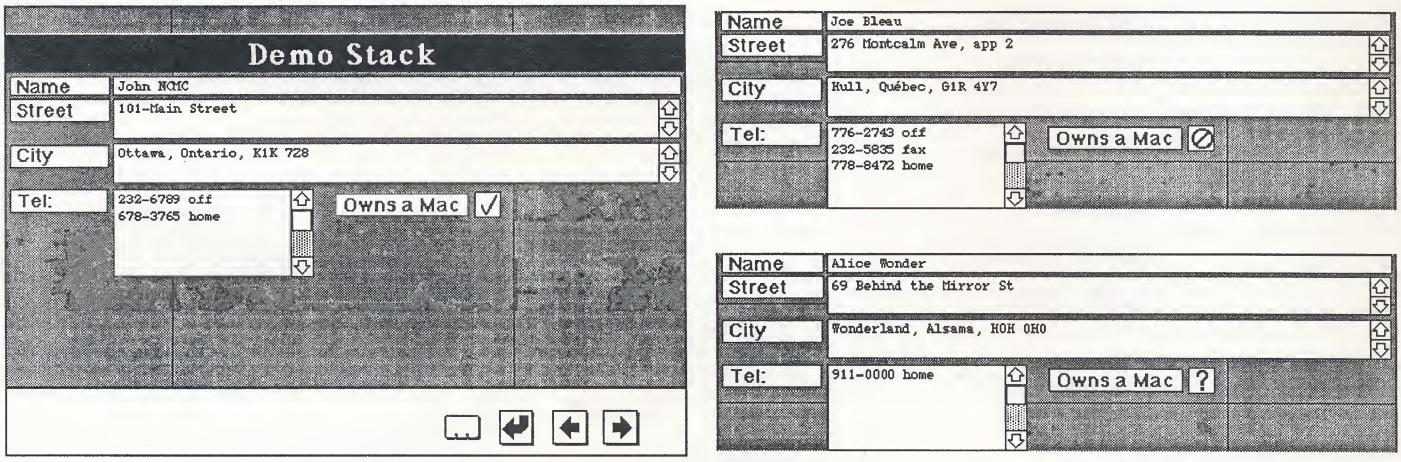

Figure 1: The RTF Stack Card Images

EXCLUSIVE ARTICLE

Diagnosing The Medical Mac

Brian Symonds M.D.

When the Macintosh was introduced in 1984, it was advertised as "the computer for the rest of us." It was easy to set up, and the programs were designed so that the user did not have to know computer language commands to operate it. People who knew nothing about computers were suddenly able to use these machines for traditional computer tasks such as word processing, file management, and financial calculations. The Macintosh also offered another advantage. Pictures and graphics were easy to use on the computer screen. Although this made the earliest models slower than IBM text based machines, it allowed almost anyone to appear to be a desktop artist, and started the "desk–top publishing revolution."

A rivalry of sorts has developed among computer users. Which type of computer system is the "best"—the mostly text–based IBM PCs and other PC-DOS type clones, or the Macintosh? PC-DOS supporters note that their machines are generally cheaper, and faster for pure word processing work. Macintosh owners note that their machines are easier to learn to use, and better for tasks involving the manipulation of graphics. Studies conducted among businesses in the United States have shown that the Macintosh computer has a lower failure rate than PC-DOS computers, and the programs designed for the Mac take less training time to learn (training costs may account for a greater portion of computing costs than the cost of the computer or its programs). Because of the advantages of the Macintosh computer, it would be expected that the medically–related use of this computer would have become common.

In British Columbia, the provincial government decided that starting in 1989, billing the provincial medical services plan would have to be done electronically. Since this announcement, numerous computer companies have developed programs to perform medical billing and other medically related tasks. To this date, all of these programs save one have been designed to work on PC-DOS computers. Programs for the Macintosh computer have been conspicuous by their absence. Also of note is a recent article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal (Vol. 140, pg. 63). In this article, Dr. David Lloyd discussed the Computer Based Learning Centre at Western University. He noted that they chose to use PC-DOS equipment, but that "Two Macintosh Plus computers are available for a limited number of programs needed for our curriculum." He also noted that one of the major problems they have encountered is that commercially available software usually cannot be modified, and faculty are reluctant to use programs that differ in content from what they would like. In contrast to this, Macintosh computer usage in the health care field, particularly in medical education, is increasing dramatically in the United States.

At the University of Missouri–Kansas City, the Macintosh is used in part to provide medical students with a "longitudinal measure of their information base in the five major areas of the undergraduate curriculum (Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Surgery, and Basic Sciences)." The students are given "Quarterly Profile Examinations", and also "Challenge Examinations" each year at the time of promotion to the next year level. The exams are done on the Macintosh and the computer does the scoring. The student receives score reports, which include references to learning resources. This helps to develop a program of study in weak areas for the student. At Stanford University, Dr. Robert Chase and Dr. Steven Freedman coordinated the development of a program called "The Electric Cadaver" for the IBM PC. However, when Stanford opened their Mac room they switched the program to the Mac. Using a Mac and HyperCard, Dr. Chase noted that they could now develop the system further themselves without the need of programmers, or knowledge of computer language. Using a Mac to drive a videodisk system, The Electric Cadaver is an interactive graphics program used to teach anatomy. It allows instructors or

students to call up any part of the body and display it in colour at almost any angle. Another program called "HeartLab" was created by Dr. B. Bergeron, an instructor in pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. This program can generate heart sounds as if heard through a stethoscope. In its test mode, a "patient" can be made to stand up and lean over while different parts of the chest wall are listened to. Once a diagnosis is made, the program will display clinical points, and it will list points for review if the wrong diagnosis was made.

These programs were all developed by doctors and medical students who have not acquired any in–depth knowledge of "high level computer languages." Of course, there are commercial programs available for the Macintosh in the U.S. that do the more mundane tasks in medicine such as record keeping and billing. There are also programs available that have a degree of "artificial intelligence." For example, MacMed is a sophisticated medical chart management system that the Health Science Center at the University of Texas at San Antonio recently installed. It not only tracks medical records and patient billings, but provides on–going differential diagnoses, suggests investigations, prognoses, and treatments. It creates alerts of possible complications, allergic reactions, and drug side–effects, and can generate detailed patient advisory printouts for specific illnesses, prescriptions, treatments, and conditions. Each advisory can be edited, updated, and otherwise altered by the attending physician, so it can be tailored to the needs of each patient. There are several commercial programs similar to this now available, and other programs that do single tasks such as medical billing. Many of the new educational programs for the Macintosh are being developed by medical students and residents in centres such as Boston, Chicago, Memphis, New York, Salt Lake City, Seattle, plus several in California. Since medicine is such a visual field, the Macintosh, with its easy to use graphics interface is especially suited to help educate medical students and physicians. With programs such as HyperCard, little knowledge of computer language is needed to develop and modify such programs. Computer use in medical education in general is discussed at various meetings such as the "Information Technology In The Health Sciences" conference which takes place at Memphis, Tennessee, each May.

When even KoKo, the famous gorilla, is using a Macintosh to clarify her sign language with her trainers, and given that there are a lot of useful programs both for education and practice management for the Mac, why does there seem to be a lack of medical users of the Macintosh computer in Canada? One factor might be the innovative use of the "Windows" program for PC-DOS computers. Companies such as QED in B.C. can make an IBM or compatible computer look like and be almost as easy to use as a Macintosh, at a fraction of the Macintosh software cost (currently in B.C. the only medical billing program available for the Macintosh retails for one thousand dollars, while a comparable QED program costs two hundred and fifty dollars). However, there is some doubt about how well Windows 3.0 will be embraced in the computer market place since the computer equipment needed to run it costs as much as a Macintosh computer! Also, until recently, there has been no single source of information about the medical use of the Macintosh computer. Groups such as the Medi–Mac Special Interest Group of the Boston Computer Society, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the American Association For Medical Systems and Informatics (AAMSI) have attempted to fill this void. The effort has been incomplete and inconsistent. Because of this, the B.C. Macintosh Medical Users Group has developed a database listing all known available medical bulletin board systems, newsletters and journals, user groups, and programs relating to the medical use of the Macintosh computer. This group can be contacted through Dr. Philip Alderman, 940 Groveland Road, West Vancouver, B.C. V7S 1Z1. *[A copy of this data base is available through the NCMC TCS, or the NCMC PD Library. –ed.]*

Another problem in acquiring a suitable Macintosh computer is its cost. While the high end Macintosh models may be among the most powerful personal computers you can buy, they are also the most expensive. But the main factor leading to the minimal use of the Macintosh in health care fields in Canada would appear to be the lack of interest of Apple Canada in promoting its computers for this

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by Deep Window

It's sad to think that there are diligent public servants who would like to do their job better and faster, but are being thwarted by *The Powers That Be.*

This guy calls me up and says "You know Mac solutions pretty well, right?" Yep. "Then," he says, "can you tell me how to rig a contract bid so that we can get Macintosh computers instead of some DOS-clone slimebeggar of a machine? We want Macs, but The Powers That Be won't accept that solution."

Was I shocked to hear someone trying to get me to participate in such unethical behaviour? Did I slam the phone in his ear? Nope. I told him everything I know about this taboo topic.

You see, just about everyone rigs their Request For Proposal (RFP) these days. It doesn't matter whether you're trying to get a big IBM mainframe, a DEC VAX, a phalanx of IBM PS/2 model 70s, or even a teeny little Mac Classic. Trying to buy computers has become an exercise in ingenuity, subterfuge and sometimes futility. The people who are buying new computers usually have a pretty good idea of what is needed. All this information gets collected and recorded in a specific format as an RFP. The RFP is sent out to the appropriate vendors for bids. That's when things get interesting.

The job of the vendor responding to an RFP is to figure out what it is that the client is really asking for, what criteria the response will evaluated on, and then propose a solution to meet that need at the cheapest price possible. The RFP will never actually state that the user wants a Mark IV PC–5000 with BananaWriter word processing software. You have to figure that out by skulking around in the Technical Requirements of the RFP. After awhile, you get the hang of picking out the subtle hints that lead you to the user's desired solution. Then on the other hand, there's The Powers That Be (TPTB.) These folks exist to keep us honest. (Yeah, right.) They evaluate all the responses to the RFP and choose the winner. On a good day, the best overall response wins. On an average day, TPTB makes sure that lowest price wins, regardless. On a bad day, it makes no difference whether you send in a wonderful proposal or a badly typed cookie recipe. Politics decide who will win the contract. Unfortunately, in the world of TPTB, there are very few good days.

Which puts Macintosh users in a bit of a pickle. How do you request a Macintosh solution in your RFP when it will probably be a bit more expensive and it does not have MS–DOS compatible expansion slots? How do you stop TPTB from blowing you away for not specifying the lowest cost DOS–clone? TPTB are not interested in the most effective or productive solution. Don't even bother trying that route. Instead, here's what you bury in your RFP:

- In order to give TPTB a warm feeling in their tummies, you have to pretend that you really want a Slimebeggar solution, so include "System must be capable of running COTS (Commercial Off The Shelf) MS–DOS software." If the day ever comes where you have to prove your system can do so, you buy a copy of Insignia Software's SoftPC and fire up Lotus 123 on your Mac.
- You have to find hardware/software features that are distinctively Macintosh and bury them in the Technical Requirements. Things like "must run MacWrite" are a no–no. Keep it as generic as possible.
- What can the Mac do that PC's can't? "System must have a SCSI disk transfer capability of no less than four megabits per second." (Most cheap clones don't use SCSI.) "The standard system and all COTS applications must be capable of supporting at least 256 shades of grey and a resolution of 377,280 pel on the display." (Anything over 786 by 480 and 256 shades is above the PC VGA standard.) "System must be capable of concurrently supporting two monitors at different resolutions and pel depths." (Good luck, Windows!) You can justify this in a DeskTop Publishing requirement.
- Avoid solutions where custom application development can be proposed to meet the requirements.

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use. One would think that Apple Canada would be promoting health care related conferences, especially conferences such as the Information Technology conference mentioned above which is co–sponsored by its parent company in the U.S. So far, Apple Canada has been silent in this area. Dr. Lorne Walton, as he ended his tenure as editor of the B.C. MacMedic newsletter, noted that it had been impossible to get any information about the use of the Macintosh in health care from Apple Canada. One of the benefits of using a Macintosh computer that will not show up in a cost benefit analysis is the help available from Macintosh User Groups. As a point in its favour, Apple seems to have finally committed itself to helping these user groups as much as possible.

As prices for the Macintosh come down, and Apple Canada does a better job of promoting Macs for use in health related fields, then more physicians and health care workers in Canada will find themselves working on Macs. Macs will also find their way into the homes of the disabled. In the future, we expect that many of the new medical programs will be locally modified without extensive computer knowledge, making them even more useful for local situations.

It *is* ease of use that makes the Macintosh computer and its medical programs stand apart from their PC-DOS counterparts.

Dr. Symonds can be reached at:
4637 Willingdon Ave.
Powell River, B.C.
V8A 2N1

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Say "Only COTS software packages will be deemed compliant."

• If you require unique software or data capture characteristics, and you know that such capabilities only exist using Mac software, write it in. "Application software must be capable of importing data from other systems running NASA's FOOBAR physics hypertext DBMS software. (Perfect cover for HyperCard compatible applications.)

• Make sure the RFP *appears* to suggest a DOS-based Windows solution. "System will support virtual memory and windowing capabilities. The system must allow multiple applications to reside in RAM storage at the same time, and allow the operator to easily switch from one application window to another in any order."

• Victory by attrition. "Application software must support a windows-based environment, allowing cut and paste functions on both text and pictures between windows." This will kill off most character-based DOS applications. Microsoft Windows can also be deep-sixed with a bit of careful research on your part. "Windowing software shall display both data and application file icons in the same window." Windows can't do this.

• Finally, "upgrade capabilities" is a place where TPTB can evaluate both Mac and DOS solutions on equal footing and pick the Mac as the best and cheapest choice without even knowing that they are doing so. "Must be capable of being upgraded to future Ethernet network attachment" and "must be capable of being upgraded to eight megabytes of RAM on the motherboard" both separates the sheep from the goats and imposes similar upgrade costs on Macintosh and DOS-based solutions.

Life in the trenches is seldom pretty, but someone has to end the PC–DOS reign of terror. If you work for The Powers That Be, then please ignore everything you have just read. No, on the other hand, it doesn't matter. What you've just read will probably never happen.

NCMC December 1990 Meetings

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						335/30 **1**
336/29 **2**	**Desktop Publishing** Up & Running West **7:30 PM** **SIG** **3**	**HyperCard** Up & Running West **7:30 PM** **SIG** **4**	**Executive Meeting** MEET **5**	340/25 **6**	341/24 **7**	342/23 **8**
343/22 **9**	**Business** Up & Running West **7:30 PM** **SIG** **10**	**Public Domain/Games** Up & Running Downtown **7:30 PM** **SIG** **11**	**CAD/CAM** Up & Running Downtown **7:30 PM** **SIG** **12**	347/18 **13**	348/17 **14**	349/16 **15**
350/15 **16**	**General Meeting** Sir Robert Borden 7:00 PM PD Sales 7:30 PM Start **17**	352/13 **18**	353/12 **19**	354/11 **20**	355/10 **21**	356/9 **22**
357/8 **23**	358/7 **24**	**Christmas Day** **25**	Boxing Day 360/5 **26**	361/4 **27**	362/3 **28**	363/2 **29**
364/1 **30**	365/0 **31**					

NCMC January 1991 Meetings

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		New Years Day **1**	**Executive Meeting** MEET **2**	3/362 **3**	4/361 **4**	5/360 **5**
6/359 **6**	**Desktop Publishing** Up & Running West **7:30 PM** **SIG** **7**	**HyperCard** Up & Running West **7:30 PM** **SIG** **8**	**CAD/CAM** Up & Running Downtown **7:30 PM** **SIG** **9**	10/355 **10**	11/354 **11**	12/353 **12**
13/352 **13**	**Business** Up & Running West **7:30 PM** **SIG** **14**	**Public Domain/Games** Up & Running Downtown **7:00 PM** **SIG** **15**	16/349 **16**	17/348 **17**	18/347 **18**	19/346 **19**
20/345 **20**	**General Meeting** Sir Robert Borden 7:00 PM PD Sales 7:30 PM Start **21**	22/343 **22**	23/342 **23**	24/341 **24**	**Green Macintosh** Lasercomp Solutions **7:30 PM** **SIG** **25**	26/339 **26**
27/338 **27**	28/337 **28**	29/336 **29**	30/335 **30**	31/334 **31**		

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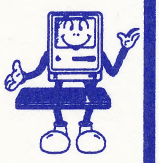

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